DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 241 632 UD 023 384

AUTHOR Prophet, Matthew W.
TITLE Changing Times Mean Rebuilding toward Excellence.
PUB DATE 30 Oct 83
NOTE 29p.; Keynote address before the Annual Legislative Meeting, National School Boards Association Council for Urban Boards of Education (16th, Washington, D.C., October 30, 1983).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Change; *Educational Improvement; *Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; Federal Government; Financial Support; Government Role; *Public Education

ABSTRACT

At a time of far-reaching change in our society, numerous national reports have criticized the American public education system as inadequate to meet the challenge and have called for reforms aimed at achieving excellence. Contrary to the general view, however, there is evidence that public education is already in the midst of a "rising tide of excellence." Many weaknesses still exist, but excellence has once again become part of the agenda in hundreds of school districts around the nation. This is clear when we look, for example, at higher standards being imposed on students around the country, widespread efforts to increase daily attendance, and tougher teacher certification laws. Although it will be difficult, due to the increasing politicization of public education, the Federal government's attempt to decrease its role in education, and the lack of adequate funding, it is up to responsible school leaders to keep the momentum going. Criticism and advice must be dealt with constructively, and concentration should be placed on meeting local goals that school boards, staff, and the community have jointly determined as essential to the improvement of local schools. (CMG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

KEYNOTE ADDRESS
16TH ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE MEETING
NSBA COUNCIL FOR URBAN BOARDS OF EDUCATION
CAPITOL INN, 550 C Street, S.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C.
October 30, 1983
Opening Session 7:00 p.m.

by
Matthew W. Prophet, Supt.
Portland Public Schools,
Portland, OR

ED241632

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
John H. Nellor
Portland OR Public Schools
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

UD023384

"CHANGING TIMES MEAN REBUILDING TOWARD EXCELLENCE"

THANK YOU AND GOOD EVENING. I AM PLEASED AND HONORED TO JOIN THIS DISTINGUISHED GROUP OF URBAN EDUCATORS FOR THIS IMPORTANT CONFERENCE.

YOUR MEETING THIS YEAR IN TIME, PLACE, AND THE CURRENT EDUCATIONAL CLIMATE, COULD NOT BE MORE APPROPRIATE AND TIMELY. WE MEET AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF A REAWAKENED NATIONAL INTEREST IN PUBLIC EDUCATION. THAT, IN ITSELF, PRESENTS UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITIES, PARTICULARLY FOR URBAN EDUCATORS, TO WORK TO EFFECT MEANINGFUL CHANGE TO IMPROVE THE NATION'S SCHOOLS. PERHAPS AT NO OTHER TIME IN THE HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY HAS THE FOCUS ON PUBLIC EDUCATION BEEN AS STRONG.

FOR EDUCATORS AND LAYMEN ALIKE, IT IS VIRTUALLY SO INTENSE THAT IT THREATENS TO DESTROY OUR PERSPECTIVE FOR PLANNING AND MANAGING CHANGE, SO VITAL AT THE LOCAL SCHOOL LEVEL, PARTICULARLY IN THE URBAN CENTERS OF THE COUNTRY. WE MUST NOT PERMIT OURSELVES TO BECOME PREOCCUPIED SOLELY WITH

THE RISING CHORUS AND CLAMOR FOR WHAT HAS BECOME TO BE LOOSELY CLASSIFIED UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF THE GENERIC DESCRIPTOR OF THE "EDUCATIONAL REFORM MOVEMENT". IT INCLUDES CRIES FOR CHANGE OF INFINITE VARIETY THAT TOUCH ON ALMOST EVERY ASPECT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION, FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE CASHBOX, EXCEPT MOST OF THESE PLEAS FOR REDIRECTION, RENEWAL AND REBIRTH DO NOT MENTION FROM WHERE THE MONEY IS TO COME TO FINANCE THIS URGENT RENAISSANCE.

WE ARE CALLED TO THE BATTLEMENTS UNARMED. WE ARE CALLED ON FOR MIRACLES, WITHOUT THE MONEY OR MANPOWER TO GET THE JOB DONE. AS URBAN SCHOOL LEADERS, WE ARE NOT UNAWARE OF THE PROBLEMS EXPOSED BY THIS GLARE OF CONCERN SPOTLIGHTING THE SCHOOLS. NOR ARE WE STRANGERS TO THE NEED FOR IMPROVED SCHOOLS, PARTICULARLY IN THE CITIES OF AMERICA. UNQUESTIONABLY EACH OF THE URBAN SCHOOL CENTERS REPRESENTED IN THIS ROOM THIS EVENING ARE ALREADY DIRECTLY ADDRESSING MANY OF THE CONCERNS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE FLURRY OF REPORTS AND STUDIES DECRYING PUBLIC EDUCATION AND PINPOINTING THE SPECIFIC AREAS FOR CHANGE, LARGELY WRITTEN BY THOSE FARTHEST FROM THE FIRING LINE.

MEANWHILE, TO BORROW THE RHETORIC OF THE SIXTIES, THE BATTLE TO PRESERVE, PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE SCHOOLS OF THE COUNTRY WILL BE FOUGHT IN THE EDUCATIONAL TRENCHES OF THE URBAN SCHOOLS. IT IS AN OBLIGATION AND RESPONSIBILITY THAT WE CANNOT IGNORE, NEGLECT OR ABANDON, AS URBAN SCHOOL LEADERS.

WE MUST TAKE THE LEAD IN INITIATING AND IMPLEMENTING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE FOR IMPROVED SCHOOLS ON EVERY HIGHWAY AND BYWAY IN AMERICA. OURS IS A SPECIAL AND PRIVILEGED OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE THE LEAD IN STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S SCHOOLS. BUT IT IS FROM THE LOCAL SCHOOL LEVEL THAT THE JOB OF ORIGINATING AND IMPLEMENTING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE MUST COME.

IT IS MY INTENTION IN MY REMARKS THIS EVENING TO PRESENT ONE MAN'S PERSPECTIVE, NOT SO MUCH ON WHAT THE EDUCATION REFORM MOVEMENT ARTICULATES, BUT ON WHAT IS LARGELY LEFT OUT AND IS NOT ADDRESSED. THAT, IT SEEMS TO ME, IS AS SIGNIFICANT AS WHAT HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN THE WIDE RANGE OF VIEWPOINTS, OPINIONS AND CONCERNS EXPRESSED, AGAIN BY THOSE LARGELY OBSERVING THE STRUGGLE FROM THE BLUFF ABOVE THE BATTLE.

THIS IS NOT TO CONDEMN OR DENIGRATE THOSE WHO HAVE PREPARED, RESEARCHED AND PUBLISHED THESE REPORTS, WHO ARE DISTINGUISHED EDUCATIONAL LEADERS. THEY HAVE EACH MADE A UNIQUE AND LASTING CONTRIBUTION TO PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THIS TIME OF CHANGE AND TRANSITION FOR THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS. I'M CERTAIN YOU ALL SHARE MY SENSE OF GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS. EACH OF THEM, WITHOUT QUESTION, WILL MAKE A LASTING IMPRINT ON PUBLIC EDUCATION. THEY ARE ALONE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MASSIVE PUBLIC FOCUS AT THIS TIME ON THE SCHOOLS WHICH, REGARDLESS OF MOTIVE OR PURPOSE, WILL ULTIMATELY CONTRIBUTE TO BETTER SCHOOLS. THEY HAVE ACCOMPLISHED IN A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, WHAT GENERATIONS OF SCHOOL LEADERS HAVE FAILED TO DO...THEY HAVE CAPTURED THE IMAGINATION AND ATTENTION OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC AS NEVER BEFORE.

THAT LAUNCHING PAD CAN SERVE AS THE SITE FROM WHICH AMERICA'S SCHOOLS CAN BE PROPELLED INTO THE TWENTY-FIRST (21st) CENTURY, JUST SEVENTEEN (17) SHORT YEARS AWAY. NONE OF US TONIGHT CAN FULLY GRASP THE RANGE OF CHANGE THAT WILL IMPACT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF TOMORROW...EVEN AS WE STAND TODAY ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE COMPUTER REVOLUTION AND A SOCIETY THAT IS IN TRANSITION FROM AN

INDUSTRIAL TO AN INFORMATION BASE. NOR CAN WE, AS URBAN SCHOOL LEADERS, AFFORD THE LUXURY OF RISING ABOVE THE BATTLE. BUT WE MUST AVOID AT ALL COSTS THE TEMPTATION TO BECOME SO PREOCCUPIED WITH THE BATTLE THAT WE LOSE THE WAR. THE STAKES ARE SIMPLY TOO HIGH...WE ARE ADDRESSING THE VERY SURVIVAL OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AS A VIABLE INSTITUTION IN OUR SOCIETY.

ALSO, ON THE FLIP SIDE OF CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE EDUCATION REFORM MOVEMENT ARE THE OBVIOUS, BUT LARGELY UNSPOKEN POLITICAL ASPECTS. I AM NOT SO NAIVE AS TO DENY THAT SCHOOLS AND POLITICS DO NOT MIX. INDEED, IT IS AN APPROPRIATE METAPHOR, AND, AFTER ALL, OUR PURPOSE IN MEETING HERE IN THE POLITICAL CENTER OF OUR COUNTRY AND THE WORLD, IS NOT BY CHANCE OR ACCIDENT. WE ARE HERE FOR AN AVOWED AND LEGITIMATE POLITICAL PURPOSE. AS URBAN SCHOOL LEADERS, IT IS OUR OBLIGATION TO "PLAY POLITICS" TO ACHIEVE THE ENDS OF BETTER SCHOOLS FOR THE NATION.

BUT THE POLITICS OF THE PAST HAVE NEVER INTRUDED ON, DEFERRED, OR DELAYED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR KIDS. TO THE CONTRARY, IT HAS SOUGHT TO PROMOTE PUBLIC EDUCATION AND CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVED SCHOOLS. TODAY, HOWEVER, GIVEN THE

IMPERATIVE THAT SCHOOLS ARE POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, WE ARE SEEING A POLITIZATION OF PUBLIC EDUCATION UNMATCHED IN OUR NATIONAL HISTORY. THE SCHOOLS, SEEMINGLY, ARE THE PAWNS OF NATIONAL POLITICS. THE EDUCATION OF FORTY-FOUR (44) MILLION AMERICAN KIDS HAS FALLEN PREY TO THE BUZZ WORDS OF THE POLITICAL CAMPAIGN AND THE PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY. KIDS ARE NOW VICTIMS, NOT THE BENEFICIARIES, OF THE QUICK QUOTE IN THE QUEST FOR VOTES.

THE MOOD AND MODE SEEMS TO BE, IF THE POLLSTERS DETECT UNREST AND CONCERN ABOUT THE SCHOOLS, TO EXPLOIT IT, REGARDLESS OF ITS IMPACT AT THE LOCAL BALLOT BOXES, WHERE THE FUNDAMENTAL DECISIONS ABOUT SCHOOLS IN AMERICA ARE ULTIMATELY MADE.

NOT ONLY DO WE MEET TONIGHT AGAINST A GROWING NATIONAL CONCERN FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION, BUT WE MEET AT A TIME WHEN THE LEVEL OF SCHOOL POLITICS IS HIGHER THAN IT HAS EVER BEEN. WITHOUT QUESTION, PUBLIC EDUCATION WILL BE A MAJOR ISSUE IN THE 1984 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN. AS TIME MAGAZINE REPORTED IN ITS OCTOBER 10th ISSUE, FEATURING THE PROPOSITION THAT AMERICA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE SHAPING UP IN THEIR "BOLD QUEST FOR QUALITY", IT BOTH ISOLATES THE POLITICAL BASIS OF THE

ADMINISTRATION'S CALLS FOR REFORM AND THE REACTION RESPONSE THAT HOLDS THE PROMISE OF FISCAL SUPPORT. AND I QUOTE:

"NO WONDER THAT EDUCATION IS BECOMING A HOT PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN ISSUE. RONALD REAGAN WAS THE FIRST TO SENSE THE OPPORTUNITY, DEMANDING TOUGHER STANDARDS AND EXTRA, OR "MERIT" PAY FOR OUTSTANDING TEACHERS. BUT REAGAN SEES LITTLE ROLE FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OR FEDERAL DOLLARS IN THE QUEST FOR EXCELLENCE. INDEED, THE ADMINISTRATION GOT CONGRESS TO CUT BACK TEN PERCENT (10%) ON PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS, AND ONLY RECENTLY STOPPED VOWING TO DISMANTLE THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

"CAUGHT OFF GUARD BY REAGAN, THE POTENTIAL DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES ARE TRYING TO DEVISE REFORM PLANS THAT WILL SCORE POINTS WITH VOTERS. WALTER MONDALE HAS CALLED FOR AN ELEVEN BILLION DOLLAR ($11 billion) ANNUAL INFUSION OF FEDERAL MONEY FOR, AMONG OTHER THINGS, A NATIONAL FOUR POINT FIVE MILLION DOLLAR ($4.5 MILLION) FUND FOR EXCELLENCE THAT WOULD GRANT SUMS TO SCHOOLS TO HELP THEM IMPROVE INSTRUCTION. SENATOR ERNEST HOLLINGS WANTS FOURTEEN BILLION DOLLARS ($14 billion), IN PART TO GIVE CERTAIN QUALIFIED PUBLIC

SCHOOL TEACHERS FIVE THOUSAND DOLLAR ($5,000) RAISES. SENATOR JOHN GLENN'S FOUR BILLION DOLLAR ($4 billion) PLAN WOULD INCLUDE LOANS TO MATH AND SCIENCE MAJORS THAT WOULD BE FORGIVEN FOR STUDENTS WHO GO ON TO TEACH THOSE SUBJECTS.

"WHILE THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES TALK OF THEIR PLANS, THE REAL LEADERSHIP IS COMING FROM THE STATE LEVEL: FROM GOVERNORS, FROM LOCAL SUPERINTENDENTS, FROM BUSINESS PEOPLE. IN A SPIRIT OF ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST, STATE OFFICIALS EQUATE BETTER SCHOOLS WITH HEALTHIER ECONOMIES. SOME FORTY-FIVE (45) STATES HAVE PUT TOGETHER TASK FORCES TO CONSIDER SCHOOL REFORM."

END QUOTE

OUR MEETING ALSO COMES AGAINST THE LANDSCAPE OF EMERGING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE THAT HAS ALREADY BEGUN AT THE LOCAL LEVEL. IT MAY WELL BE THAT THE EDUCATION REFORM MOVEMENT WILL PROVE TO BE ONE THAT FALLS VICTIM TO THE MOMENTUM OF CHANGE THAT PREDATES THE CRIES FOR REFORM. AS LONG AS IT RESULTS IN IMPROVED SCHOOLS, IT REALLY DOESN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE WHAT CAME FIRST...THE CHICKEN OR THE EGG.

DESPITE ALL THE SOUND AND FURY ASSOCIATED WITH THE

EDUCATION REFORM MOVEMENT, ONE CANNOT SAY WITH ANY CERTAINTY THAT IT WILL OR WILL NOT IMPROVE THE SCHOOLS...BUT ONE THING IS FOR CERTAIN, IT HAS BEEN A REAL SHOT-IN-THE-ARM FOR THE PUBLISHING INDUSTRY IN THIS COUNTRY.

TRULY, WE MEET AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF AN UNPRECEDENTED ERA IN AMERICAN EDUCATION. IT IS A TIME OF CRISIS, CRITICISM, CONFUSION AND CONFLICT ABOUT THE GOALS, PURPOSES, DIRECTION, AND EFFECTIVENESS OF AMERICAN PUBLIC EDUCATION. IT IS ALSO A TIME OF UNPARALLELED OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGE.

BY MY LATEST COUNT, AND I HAVE NOT AS YET HAD TIME TO READ TODAY'S NEWSPAPER...THERE ARE ABOUT TWELVE (12) NATIONAL REPORTS DEPLORING THE CONDITION OF EDUCATION. THEY ALL CALL FOR SOMEBODY...ANYBODY.. TO DO SOMETHING AND TO DO IT NOW!

UNFORTUNATELY, THERE IS NO MORE UNANIMITY AMONG THE VARIOUS REPORTS ON PRECISELY WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE AND HOW TO DO IT, THAN ONE WOULD FIND IN THIS ROOM, IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION OF, "HOW TO RUN A GOOD SCHOOL SYSTEM."

THE REPORTS, STUDIES AND ANALYSES ALL CALL FOR

EDUCATION REFORM. ALL ASPECTS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION ARE TOUCHED ON BY THESE TREATISES. BUT THE FOCUS OF MANY OF THEM SEEMS TO BE ON THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS. WHETHER INTENDED OR NOT, THE IMPLICATION IS THAT EDUCATION IS A FAILING, OR AT LEAST AN AILING, INSTITUTION.

DONNA RAVITCH, IN HER BOOK, "THE TROUBLED CRUSADE" WHICH EXAMINES SCHOOLS IN THE TRANSITION FROM 1945 TO 1980, A TIME WHEN SCHOOLS WERE OFTEN VIEWED AS INSTITUTIONS THAT FAILED, AND WERE OBSTACLES TO A MORE PRODUCTIVE FUTURE, COMMENTS, AND I QUOTE:

"AMERICAN EDUCATION IS RESILIENT AND CAPABLE OF CHANGE FOR BETTER OR WORSE."

END QUOTE

IT IS, OF COURSE, TO THE FORMER THAT WE MUST COMMIT OUR EFFORTS. THE RECORD IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, IN THE LONG HISTORY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN AMERICA, EFFECTIVE CHANGE HAS BY FAR BEEN DOMINANT. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF PUBLIC EDUCATION HAS NO EQUAL IN THE WORLD.

IN ITS INCEPTION, PURPOSE AND FUNCTION, IT IS A UNIQUE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION THAT PERFORMS, HAS

PERFORMED, AND WILL CONTINUE TO PERFORM AN UNPARALLELED ROLE IN AMERICAN SOCIETY. IT IS, AND REMAINS, THE PLACE THAT, AT ITS BEST, REPRESENTS A MICROCOSM OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AND AT ITS WORST, CONTINUES TO OUTPERFORM COMPAPABLE SCHOOLS ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

IT IS A PECULIARLY AMERICAN INSTITUTION THAT GREW OUT OF THE EMERGING NEEDS OF OUR EVOLVING DEMOCRACY. ONE MIGHT SAY IT IS THE ESSENTIAL MELTING POT OF OUR SOCIETY WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE OF DIVERSE ECONOMIC AND ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS LEARN TO LIVE AND WORK TOGETHER TO BECOME PRODUCTIVE CITIZENS IN OUR SOCIETY.

OF COURSE, WE CAN DO BETTER...AND THE SCHOOLS HAVE FAULTS. NO ONE WOULD DENY THAT. FOR INSTANCE, EVERY SCHOOL LEADER IN AMERICA KNOWS WHAT THE PROBLEMS ARE...AND HAS KNOWN THEM FOR A LONG TIME, AND KNOWS HOW TO SOLVE THEM.

WITHOUT DENIGRATING THE VALUE AND WORTH OF THESE REPORTS, IT NEEDS TO BE SAID THAT SOME OF THEM SEEM TO BE TRYING TO REINVENT THE WHEEL. MOST OF US WHO WORK IN PUBLIC EDUCATION, OR CARE ABOUT IT, ARE AWARE OF WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE. TO BORROW A PHRASE FROM THAT FABLED LEADER OF WORLD WAR II,

WINSTON CHURCHILL, WHO APPEALED TO AMERICA IN A TIME OF PERIL FOR ENGLAND: "GIVE US THE TOOLS AND WE WILL DO THE JOB."

IN A SENSE, AMID THIS PROLIFERATION OF ADVICE, THAT QUOTATION COULD WELL BE OUR KEYNOTE. THIS AVALANCHE OF ADVICE FAILS TO TALK ABOUT COSTS OR EVEN FROM WHERE THE MONEY TO FINANCE, IF NOT MANAGE CHANGE, IS TO COME.

ALL OF US WOULD AGREE THAT PROBLEMS CANNOT NECESSARILY BE SOLVED BY SIMPLY THROWING MONEY AT THEM. BUT BY THE SAME TOKEN, WE WOULD ALL AGREE THAT NEITHER WILL THE PROBLEMS BE SOLVED BY THE ABSENCE OF MONEY.

PERHAPS THE CHIEF VALUE OF THESE NEW APPEALS FOR REFORM IS THAT THEY POINT THE DIRECTION FOR WIDESPREAD AND OVERDUE DRAMATIC CHANGE IN EDUCATION AND SOCIETY. OUR SCHOOLS AND ALL OF OUR INSTITUTIONS ARE BEING TRANSFORMED BY AN EMERGING TECHNOLOGY AND A RISING TIDE OF EXPECTATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN ALL WALKS OF LIFE.

IT IS UP TO US TO DELIVER, TO RESPOND, TO AGAIN... AS THE SCHOOLS HAVE ALWAYS DONE...RISE TO THE OCCASION. CHANGE IS NO STRANGER TO US...IT IS OUR

CONSTANT COMPANION. I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE, PUBLIC EDUCATION, AND YOU IN THIS ROOM, ARE EQUAL TO THE TASK. WE CAN MEET THE CHALLENGE FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE 80s. THE PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN EDUCATION CAN BE SOLVED. AND THEY CAN BE SOLVED WITHIN OUR SYSTEM WITHOUT SACRIFICING EITHER OUR GOALS OR STANDARDS, OR THE EDUCATION OF KIDS.

SOUND SCHOOL PROGRAMS, REGARDLESS OF CONFIGURATION (AND THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE OF OUR HIGH SCHOOLS) DEMONSTRATE THAT STUDENTS FROM EVERY BACKGROUND CAN REACH HIGH LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION, SKILL AND ACHIEVEMENT. IT IS PART OF OUR CHALLENGE FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE 80s TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT THIS IS A UNIVERSAL CHARACTERISTIC OF ALL OF OUR SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS.

AS I HAVE SAID, THE DEMAND FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM IS GREATER TODAY THAN IT HAS EVER BEEN, AND CRITICISM IS RAMPANT. IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE PRECISE, THOUGHTFUL STUDIES OF THE EXPERTS AND THE MINDLESS CARPING OF THOSE WHO SIMPLY HAVE AXES TO GRIND, OR ARE TURNING A SINGLE INCIDENT OF DISAPPOINTMENT INTO A LIFETIME VENDETTA AGAINST THE SCHOOLS.

AS RESPONSIBLE EDUCATORS, WE MUST DEAL WITH BOTH

THE CONSTRUCTIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE CRITICISMS AND ADVICE WE ARE GETTING IN SUCH ABUNDANCE. AS YOU KNOW, IT COMES FROM SUCH DIVERGENT SOURCES AS THE WHITE HOUSE, THE STATEHOUSE, AND THE MAN ON THE STREET.

I SUBMIT THAT THE BEST WAY TO RESPOND TO BOTH IS THROUGH COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND ACTION. IF THE SCHOOLS ARE TO ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE IN THE 80s...IF WE ARE TO REALIZE REFORM...IT MUST START AT THE GRASS ROOTS, <u>IN YOUR SCHOOLS AND MINE</u>.

LET ME TRY FOR A MOMENT TO PUT THE DIMENSION OF OUR TASK IN PERSPECTIVE. IN HELPING ME TO DO SO, I AM TURNING TO TWO SOURCES THAT SOME OF YOU MAY FIND SURPRISING. I WILL QUOTE THEM WITHOUT ATTRIBUTION FIRST...BUT AFTER CITING THEM, I WILL IDENTIFY THE AUTHORS. BOTH ADDRESS OUR CHALLENGES AND OUR MISSION IN MEETING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF TOMORROW TODAY.

HERE'S THE FIRST QUOTATION:

"SOMEONE ONCE SAID OF OUR COUNTRY THAT 'WE SOARED INTO THE 20TH CENTURY ON THE WINGS OF INVENTION AND THE WINDS OF CHANGE.' IN A FEW YEARS' TIME,

WE AMERICANS WILL SOAR INTO THE 21ST CENTURY, AND AGAIN IT WILL BE ON THE WINGS OF INVENTION AND THE WINDS OF CHANGE. AND YOU WILL HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR MUCH OF THAT CHANGE. IN LARGE MEASURE, THE QUALITY OF YOUR INDIVIDUAL LIVES, AND YOUR CHILDREN'S LIVES, WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE QUALITY OF THE EDUCATION THAT YOU'VE RECEIVED... AT HOME AND AT SCHOOL...TO PREPARE YOU FOR THIS NEW WORLD OF CHALLENGE, INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY.

"THE OTHER DAY I WAS SHOWN A LITTLE TINY PIECE OF FIBER. IT LOOKED ALMOST LIKE SOMETHING OF A DECORATION. I WAS TOLD THAT THIS WAS PART OF A SATELLITE SYSTEM THAT CAN TRANSMIT THE ENTIRE ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITTANICA IN THREE SECONDS.

"BUT FOR YOU TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ALL THESE AWESOME NEW ADVANCES...AND FOR YOUR CHILDREN TO... WE MUST FORGE AN EDUCATION SYSTEM CAPABLE OF MEETING THE DEMANDS OF CHANGE."

END QUOTE

AND NOW HERE'S THE SECOND:

"EDUCATION, IT HAS BEEN SAID, REPRESENTS THE SOUL OF SOCIETY AS IT PASSES FROM ONE GENERATION TO THE

NEXT. THAT THOUGHT SHOULD MAKE US SOBER. ALL THAT WE ARE...ALL THE GREAT DEVOTIONS, ALL THE CRUCIAL WRITINGS, AND THE WHOLE MASS OF TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE THAT HAS PRODUCED A CIVILIZATION IN WHICH MILLIONS LIVE IN THE MIDST OF FREEDOM AND ABUNDANCE...ALL THESE STAND PERCHED AT THE EDGE OF AN ABYSS EACH TIME ONE GENERATION ATTEMPTS TO EDUCATE THE NEXT.

"IF WE STUMBLE ONCE, WE ARE LOST. IF WE FAIL TO INSTRUCT OUR CHILDREN IN REASON, JUSTICE, RELIGION, AND LIBERTY, THEY WILL NOT KNOW THESE VIRTUES BUT WILL LIVE INSTEAD IN THE TWILIGHT OF A WORLD IN WHICH THE GREAT TRUTHS HAVE BEEN FORGOTTEN. KNOWLEDGE REPRESENTS A TRUST HANDED DOWN TO US BY THE GENERATIONS. TO PASS THAT TRUST ON INTACT...TO EDUCATE...REPRESENTS NO MERE TASK, BUT A HIGH DUTY."

END QUOTE

THE AUTHOR OF THE FIRST QUOTE IS PRESIDENT REAGAN, FROM A COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS AT SETON HALL IN MAY THIS YEAR. THE SECOND COMES FROM AN ADDRESS BY VICE PRESIDENT BUSH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS LAST APRIL.

PERHAPS AT THIS POINT I SHOULD SIMPLY REFER TO THE

EARLIER QUOTE FROM CHURCHILL THAT I CITED AND RESPOND BY COMMENTING, "GIVE US THE TOOLS...AND WE WILL FINISH THE JOB."

AS ANYONE KNOWS, WHO IS FAMILIAR WITH THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CURRENT CROP OF MAJOR COMMENTARIES ABOUT CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION, WE MUST NOT BE VICTIMIZED BY THIS PROLIFERATION OF CONFLICTING ADVICE. WHILE WE HAVE A COMMITMENT TO CHANGE AND EXCELLENCE AS EDUCATORS, WE MUST ALSO TEMPER OUR RUSH TO REFORM WITH OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO LOOK BEFORE WE LEAP.

THERE IS A COMPANION DANGER THAT IN OUR ZEAL TO MANAGE ALL OF THIS ADVICE, THE NEED TO IMPLEMENT CHANGE AT THE LOCAL SCHOOL LEVEL WILL BECOME BOGGED DOWN BY THE SHEER VOLUME OF THE LEVEL OF INPUT FROM LOCAL, STATE AND NATIONAL SOURCES.

WE ALL HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO EXAMINE AND STUDY ALL OF THESE REPORTS, BUT WE CANNOT LET THEM DOMINATE OUR TIME AND ENERGY. WITH THE OPENING OF THIS NEW SCHOOL YEAR, OUR PRIMARY OBLIGATION IS TO DEVOTE OUR TIME AND ATTENTION TO THE NEED TO MEET LOCAL GOALS THAT SCHOOL BOARDS, STAFF, AND THE COMMUNITY HAVE JOINTLY DETERMINED AS ESSENTIAL TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS.

OUR PRIMARY FOCUS MUST BE CONCENTRATED ON INTERNAL EFFORTS TOWARD EXCELLENCE. WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION IN THIS CROSS-CURRENT OF THE NATIONAL DEBATE ON HOW BEST TO IMPROVE THE SCHOOLS, TO SORT OUT FROM THE OFTEN CONFLICTING RECOMMENDATIONS...THE WHEAT FROM THE CHAFF...THE IMPORTANT FROM THE MUNDANE. THE DANGER IS, OF COURSE, IN THIS PLETHORA OF ADVICE, WE WILL BE CAST ADRIFT, RUDDERLESS, IN A SEA OF CONFUSION. WE MUST SHARPEN OUR FOCUS ON THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THESE SHRILL CALLS FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM, AND MAKE THE MOST OF THEM.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP OUR FEET ON THE GROUND AND OUR SENSE OF DIRECTION INTACT. THERE IS, OF COURSE, MUCH OF VALUE FROM WHICH WE CAN PROFIT IN THIS FLURRY OF ADVICE AND CRITICISM. BUT THE ONLY EMERGING CONSENSUS IN THE AVALANCHE OF ADVICE CONTAINED IN THE PROLIFERATION OF REPORTS, STUDIES AND ANALYSES OF THE NEED FOR EDUCATION REFORM THAT QUALITY TEACHING IS THE KEY TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND IT NEEDS RE-EMPHASIS AND REDEFINITION. THERE IS NO CONSENSUS ON HOW THIS SHOULD BE DONE. SUGGESTIONS RANGE FROM CALLS FOR MERIT PAY, TO FEDERALLY LEGISLATED MASTER TEACHING PROGRAMS.

AS TIME MAGAZINE ALSO POINTS OUT IN ITS OCTOBER 20

EDITION, THE FOCUS FOR ATTENTION AMONG THE MANY IS THE REPORT OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION. IT SEEMS TO HAVE DRAWN THE MOST ATTENTION AND THE MOST CRITICISM. AND I QUOTE:

"OVER THE PAST YEAR A FLURRY OF REPORTS HAVE CHRONICLED A NATION WITH DECLINING BASIC SKILLS, FOUNDERING WILL AND A DIMINISHING ABILITY TO COMPETE WITH A HI-TECH RIVAL LIKE JAPAN. IN MAY, THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION (NCEE) STIRRED THE MOST CONCERN WHEN IT REPORTED THAT THE U.S. WAS 'AT RISK' FROM 'A RISING TIDE OF MEDIOCRITY.' ITS JUDGMENT: STANDARDS ARE TOO LOW, THE SCHOOL DAY IS TOO SHORT, TEACHERS ARE PAID TOO LITTLE AND EDUCATION IS TOO FAR DOWN THE LIST OF NATIONAL PRIORITIES. THE REPORT'S RINGING INDICTMENT: 'IF AN UNFRIENDLY FOREIGN POWER HAD ATTEMPTED TO IMPOSE ON AMERICA THE MEDIOCRE EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE THAT EXISTS TODAY, WE MIGHT WELL HAVE VIEWED IT AS AN ACT OF WAR.' WHAT THE N.C.E.E. FAILED TO REPORT, HOWEVER, IS THAT THE TIDE OF MEDIOCRITY HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO EBB."

END QUOTE

I SUBMIT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THAT TO THE CONTRARY, WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF A "RISING TIDE OF EXCELLENCE." IT IS A FACT THAT PUBLIC EDUCATION HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO TURN THE TIDE AMID THE UNDIMINISHED DIN FOR REFORM

THAT DRAWS DESERVED CRITICISM AND CONCERN. COULD IT BE THAT A RAPID RESPONSE BY THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS DOES NOT SERVE NARROW POLITICAL OR PARTISAN PURPOSES?

REGARDLESS, THE EVIDENCE OF EXCELLENCE IN TODAY'S SCHOOLS ABOUNDS. I'M CERTAIN A ROLL CALL OF THE STATES REPRESENTED AT THIS MEETING WOULD ELICIT A REMARKABLE ARRAY OF COMMITMENTS TO EXCELLENCE TO VERIFY THAT WE ARE IN FULL PURSUIT OF "THE BOLD QUEST FOR QUALITY." LET ME CITE A FEW EXAMPLES THAT THE SCHOOLS ARE, INDEED, ON TARGET.

THE FIRST EXAMPLE PROVIDES AN ELOQUENT RESPONSE TO CRIES FOR INCREASED GRADUATION STANDARDS AND LONGER SCHOOL DAYS AND YEARS. I QUOTE FROM AN ARTICLE CIRCULATED ON THE EDUCATIONAL NETWORK OPERATED BY THE NATIONAL SCHOOL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION. AND I QUOTE:

"CONTRARY TO WHAT MIGHT BE EXPECTED, THE NATION'S MOST ELITE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS REQUIRE FEWER GRADUATION UNITS, FEWER DAYS IN SCHOOL AND FEWER SPECIAL PROGRAMS FOR THE GIFTED THAN CURRENT STUDIES SAY SHOULD BE THE NORM FOR SCHOOLS.

"ABOUT THIRTY (30) PRINCIPALS AND SOME OF THEIR

SUPERINTENDENTS OF SCHOOLS RECOGNIZED BY THE MEDIA OR OTHER EDUCATORS AS BEING ACADEMICALLY OUTSTANDING, ARE GATHERING HERE FOR THREE DAYS OF DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THEIR CHARACTERISTICS AND PROGRAMS.

"A SUMMARY OF PROFILES THAT COVERED TWENTY-TWO (22) OF THE SCHOOLS SHOWS THAT THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS IS TWENTY (20). THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS OF INSTRUCTION IS ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-NINE (179) - [THE HIGHEST WAS ONLY ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY-TWO (182)], ONLY TWO HAVE SELECT ADMISSIONS, AND THE AVERAGE ENROLLMENT FOR THE GROUP IS LARGE - MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED (1,900) STUDENTS FOR THE FOUR-YEAR SCHOOL.

"ONLY FOUR OF THE SCHOOLS INDICATED THEY HAD A MERIT PAY PLAN ABOVE THE STANDARD SALARY SCHEDULE. HOWEVER, MERIT PAY MAY NOT BE NECESSARY BECAUSE THE AVERAGE TEACHER SALARY, EXCLUDING SPECIAL DUTY PAY, IS TWENTY-SIX THOUSAND, NINE HUNDRED SIXTY DOLLARS ($26,960). THE RANGE IS FROM A LOW OF SEVENTEEN THOUSAND, EIGHT HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS ($17,850) TO A HIGH OF FORTY THOUSAND DOLLARS ($40,000). THE ACTUAL AVERAGE SALARY FOR THE PRINCIPALS OF THESE SCHOOLS IS FIFTY THOUSAND, SEVEN HUNDRED FIVE DOLLARS ($50,705.)

"THESE SCHOOLS ALSO HAVE AN AVERAGE OF SEVEN PERIODS IN THE SCHOOL DAY, LASTING FIFTY-ONE (51) MINUTES EACH.

"THE FIGURES WERE COMPILED BY THE HIGHLAND PARK HIGH SCHOOL, WHICH IS HOSTING THE 'GREAT EXPECTATIONS' CONFERENCE FOR SELECTED COLLEGE-PREP HIGH SCHOOLS. MANY OF THE SCHOOLS INVOLVED WERE CITED LAST YEAR BY MONEY MAGAZINE AS THE OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC HIGH SCHOOLS OF THE COUNTRY."

END QUOTE

THE WASHINGTON WINDMILL COLUMN IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE OF THE EXECUTIVE EDUCATOR COMMENTS EVEN MORE BLUNTLY AND AGAIN, I QUOTE:

"POLITICALLY TINGED PRONOUNCEMENTS ON THE NEED FOR HIGHER STANDARDS IN U.S. SCHOOLS MASK THE FACT THAT MANY STATES ALREADY HAVE DONE SOMETHING ABOUT EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT. THIRTY STATES NOW HAVE MINIMUM COMPETENCY TESTS FOR STUDENTS, AND TWENTY HAVE COMPETENCY TESTING FOR TEACHER CERTIFICATION, ACCORDING TO AN ANNUAL ASSESSMENT COMPILED BY THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS. SURVEYING FIVE HUNDRED SEVENTY-ONE (571) SCHOOL SYSTEMS FOR ITS ANNUAL STUDY, 'THE CONDITION OF EDUCATION,' N.C.E.S. ALSO FOUND THAT SEVENTY

PERCENT (70%) OF THE SYSTEMS SURVEYED HAVE ADOPTED PROGRAMS TO BOOST SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, FIFTY-THREE PERCENT (53%) HAVE INCREASED THE NUMBER OF COURSES NEEDED FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION, AND FORTY-EIGHT PERCENT (48%) HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' STUDY SKILLS. ACCORDING TO THAT STUDY, THE FOCUS OF SCHOOL PROGRAMS VARIES ACCORDING TO REGION. FOR EXAMPLE, SCHOOLS IN THE NORTHEAST HAVE FIFTY-ONE PERCENT (51%) OF THEIR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN ACADEMIC COURSES OF STUDY, COMPARED TO A NATIONAL AVERAGE OF THIRTY-EIGHT PERCENT (38%); IN THE SOUTH, TWENTY-EIGHT PERCENT (28%) OF THE STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED IN VOCATIONAL COURSES, COMPARED TO TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT (25%) NATIONWIDE. THE REMAINING THIRTY-SEVEN PERCENT (37%) OF STUDENTS NATIONWIDE ARE ENROLLED IN GENERAL COURSES OF STUDY."

END QUOTE

THE PATIENT MAY NOT BE AS ILL AS ADVERTISED, AND RECOVERY MAY WELL EXCEED EVEN THE MOST OPTIMISTIC OF PREDICTIONS. LET'S LOOK AT SOME MORE ENCOURAGING STATISTICS.

THERE ARE PLENTY OF WEAKNESSES STILL, BUT EXCELLENCE HAS ONCE AGAIN BECOME PART OF THE

AGENDA IN HUNDREDS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. STATISTICS ONLY SKETCH OUT THE DIMENSIONS OF THE TURNAROUND. OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS:

1. FIFTY-THREE PERCENT (53%) OF THE SIXTEEN THOUSAND (16,000) SCHOOL DISTRICTS NATIONWIDE HAVE INCREASED THE NUMBER OF CREDITS THEY REQUIRE IN SUCH CORE SUBJECTS AS ENGLISH. SCIENCE AND MATH.
2. THIRTY-EIGHT PERCENT (38%) MORE WILL UPGRADE THEIR STANDARDS BY 1985.
3. SIXTY-NINE PERCENT (69%) OF SCHOOL SYSTEMS HAVE LAUNCHED EFFORTS TO INCREASE DAILY ATTENDANCE.
4. TWENTY (20) STATES HAVE PASSED TOUGHER CERTIFICATION LAWS, WITH THE GOAL OF MAKING SURE THAT A TEACHER HAS MASTERED BASIC SKILLS BEFORE EVER ENTERING A CLASSROOM.

OF COURSE, THERE IS NO INSTANT PANACEA TO MEET ALL THE CHALLENGES OR RESPOND TO THE SPECIFICS OF ALL THE PLEAS FOR ACTION. AS ONE OBSERVER OF THE EDUCATION SCENE BELIEVES, MANY OF THE PROBLEMS ARISE FROM INATTENTION BY LEADERS OF THE ADULT SOCIETY TO THE MEANS OF EDUCATION, INCLUDING.

1. INATTENTION TO TEACHERS' MATERIAL NEEDS.
2. INATTENTION TO STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE.

3. INATTENTION TO THE PROPOSITION THAT THE SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED HAVE THE HIGHEST STAKE IN THE AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL DREAM.
4. INATTENTION TO THE PHYSICAL FACILITIES IN OUR SCHOOLS.
5. INATTENTION TO CURRICULA THAT MUST MEET ETHICAL AS WELL AS TECHNICAL STANDARDS.

AS A CONSEQUENCE OF ALL OF THIS INATTENTION, THE PRESIDENT OF YALE UNIVERSITY, A. BARTLET LIAMATTI, BELIEVES, AND I QUOTE:

"WHEN A PEOPLE'S LEADERSHIP DOES NOT PAY ATTENTION CONSTANTLY TO ONE OF THE PEOPLE'S PRIMARY MEANS OF PAYING ATTENTION TO ITS FUTURE, THERE IS ALWAYS PANIC. THE PANIC MANIFESTS ITSELF, AS IT HAS ABOUT EDUCATION IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS, WHEN THE PUBLIC INSTRUMENTS FOR PUBLIC DISCOURSE, THE POLITICAL-JOURNALISTIC COMPLEX, SUDDENLY DISCOVER THAT THE PEOPLE ARE DISSATISFIED.

"THE GAUDY HALFTIME SHOW PUT ON IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS BY THE STRUTTING INCUMBENTS AND ASPIRANTS FOR OFFICE, FOLLOWED AS ALWAYS BY THE MASSED TROMBONES AND XYLOPHONES OF THE PRESS, WILL PROBABLY DO NO REAL HARM, ALTHOUGH THE RACKET WILL BE TREMENDOUS FOR AWHILE. IT IS TOO BAD THAT THE

"ELECTED AND SELF-ANOINTED DEFENDERS OF OUR LIBERTIES AND NATIONAL WELL-BEING DO SO LITTLE SUSTAINED HOMEWORK, HAVE SUCH SHORT ATTENTION SPANS, NEVER SEEM TO KNOW WHERE TO GO UNTIL A POLL COMMISSIONED BY ONE PART OF THE POLITICAL-JOURNALISTIC COMPLEX IS READ BY THE OTHER PART AND THE WHOLE HERD ACQUIRES THE COURAGE TO RUSH OFF TOGETHER TO OBSERVE THEMSELVES IN ACTION."

END QUOTE

<u>LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I SUBMIT THAT WE HAVE THEIR ATTENTION.</u> THE BALL IS IN OUR COURT. IT IS PAST TIME TO GET ON WITH THE GAME. WE MUST START TODAY ON OUR AGENDA FOR TOMORROW.

LET ME CONCLUDE BY SUGGESTING SEVERAL OF THE OBVIOUS SHORTCOMINGS OF SUCH AN IMPORTANT NATIONAL DOCUMENT AS "A NATION AT RISK":

1. IT DEALS WITH THE COGNITIVE ASPECTS OF EDUCATION AND VIRTUALLY IGNORES THE EQUALLY IMPORTANT AFFECTIVE ASPECTS.

2. THE VISION OF THE PURPOSE AND GOALS OF EDUCATION PRESENTED IN THE REPORT IS NARROW AND LIMITED.

3. THE COMMISSION'S REPORT OF THE STATE OF EDUCATION IS FALSELY, OVERLY NEGATIVE.

THE STRUGGLE TO MANAGE CHANGE TO IMPROVE THE SCHOOLS WILL NOT BE EASY...IT WILL BE COSTLY AND TAKE TIME BUT I AM CERTAIN THAT YOU SHARE MY CONVICTION THAT MOST PEOPLE ARE WILLING "TO ENTERTAIN THE IDEA OF SPENDING MORE MONEY ON THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION...IF THEY GET THEIR MONEY'S WORTH."

BUT, AT LEAST IT IS NOT A LONELY STRUGGLE. WHO THEN, ARE OUR ALLIES IN THIS ESSENTIAL AND URGENT CAMPAIGN? WE'RE JOINED AND SUSTAINED BY:

1. THE KIDS - WHO WANT TO BE FULLY PREPARED TO LIVE USEFUL AND PRODUCTIVE LIVES.

2. THE TEACHERS - WHO ARE THE BACKBONE OF OUR PROFESSION AND WHO WANT THE TIME TO TEACH AND PROVIDE THE CREATIVE EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP, AND DO IT IN DIGNITY.

3. THE PARENTS - WHO WANT THE BEST FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

4. THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY - THAT WANTS THE SCHOOLS TO BE STRONG AND RESPONSIVE TO THEIR NEEDS.

5. OUR CITIES - WHICH RECOGNIZE THAT GOOD SCHOOLS ARE ESSENTIAL TO A HEALTHY COMMUNITY.

6. THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE - WHICH RECOGNIZES THAT GOOD SCHOOLS ARE KEYS TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND THE FUTURE IN KEEPING WITH OUR NATIONAL TRADITION OF TRANSMITTING OUR CULTURE THROUGH OUR SCHOOLS.

THE EDUCATIONAL PENDULUM IS ON THE UPSWING AGAIN. IT IS UP TO US TO MAKE THE MOST OF IT. THE JOB AHEAD IS A BIG ONE AND WE MUST DO IT WELL AND WITH CREATIVITY, SENSITIVITY AND ARTISTRY, AS WE CONTINUE TO BUILD TOWARD EXCELLENCE.

LET'S RECOGNIZE THAT WE ARE THE INHERITORS OF GREAT OPPORTUNITIES. IT HAS FALLEN TO US TO TAKE THE LEADERSHIP IN MANAGING CHANGE TO MEET THE CHALLENGE FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE 80s. LET'S PLEDGE TO OURSELVES AND TO EACH OTHER TONIGHT TO MAKE THE MOST OF OUR OPPORTUNITIES.

THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK.